REMARKS

Attached hereto are replacement sheets for each of Figs. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7,(b), 11, 12(a), 13 and 15 to overcome the objection thereto under 37 CFR 1.84(b)(3). The size of the reference characters and text which the Examiner has objected to has been reduced to fit within each box in compliance with 37 CFR 1.84(2)(3). In addition, in Fig. 12(a) and Fig. 13 the hatch placed under the text "A" in Fig. 12(a) and under the text (-1) in Fig. 13 has been deleted. Applicant believes all of the replacement drawings now comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.84(b)(3) and the objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 1-2, 4, 7-8 and 10 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Koakutsu et al (US 2003/0068077) is respectfully traversed.

Applicant wishes to point out to the Examiner that the cited reference Koakutsu '077 is assigned to applicants US subsidiary Epson Research and Development Inc., and that the inventor of the subject application is a co-inventor in the cited reference.

Applicant believes the Examiner has interpreted the expression "binarization method" far too broadly, giving it an interpretation which is not justified by its plain meaning as understood by those skilled in the art and contrary to how the term is used in the subject application. The Koakutsu '077 reference teaches only one method of binarization and this one method is dependent upon a threshold value calculation. There are no plural binarization methods taught in Koakutsu '077 from which a selection is made much less with the selection based on evaluation of the

second image data. The calculation of a threshold value from the density distribution of pixels is an integral part of the threshold value calculation process in the first binarization method of the subject application, whereas the second binarization method is independent of the first binarization method and uses a threshold value which is a predefined constant. There are no separate "binarization methods" taught in Koakutsu '077.

To emphasize this distinction, claims 1 and 7 have been amended to define each binarization method as being independent of one another with each involving a separate analysis using different gray scale data. Koakutsu '077 teaches only one binarization method and does not teach an evaluation section for selecting the binarization method to be used. The second binarization method of the subject application is referred to as the "sharpness method of binarization". Each method of binarization is independent of one another and each involves a separate analysis using different gray scale data. The reference by the Examiner to a selection of different values in the calculation of a threshold value does not constitute a selection between independent binarization methods in the subject application or in Koakutsu '077. Moreover, the subject invention teaches an evaluation section for making a selection of the first or second binarization method to be used based on the second image data. Koakutsu does not teach an evaluation section for selecting a first or second binarization method based on an evaluation of the second image data.

For all of the above reasons the rejection of claims 1 and 7 as anticipated by Koakutsu '077 under 35 USC 102(g) should be withdrawn. Claims 2, 4, 8 and 10 are dependent claims and are believed patentable for the same reasons as given above.
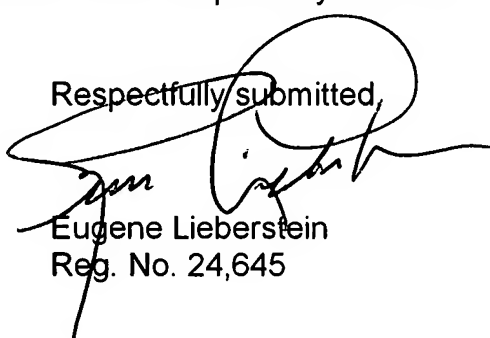
The rejection of claim 12 under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Koakutsu et is respectfully traversed.

Claim 12 is dependent upon the method of claim 7 which has been amended to clearly distinguish the methodology of the subject invention from the methodology taught in Koakutsu et al in which only one binarization method is taught using a threshold calculation method based on density distribution similar to the calculation of threshold for the first binarization method taught by applicant.

Accordingly, claim 12 which depends thereon is believed patentable for the same reasons as given above in that there is no selection between separate binarization methods in the teaching of Koakutsu et al.

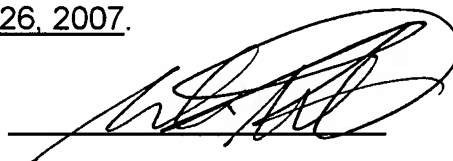Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-12 is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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MAILING CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on June 26, 2007.

IN THE DRAWINGS

Applicant has attached hereto replacement drawing sheets for Figs. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7(a) and 7(b), 11, 12(a), 12(b) and 12(c), 13, and 15.

Each drawing sheet is labeled "REPLACEMENT SHEET" on the top margin.